

Beauty and the Beast



illustrated by
Joanne Moss



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hunareas or years. The ancient story of Cupid and Psyche, told by the Roman poet Apuleius, contains many of the same elements as *Beauty and the Beast*.

One 19th century scholar, W. R. S. Ralston, discovered similar tales from Scandinavia,

Germany, Crete, India, Russia and Mongolia. There is even a version from Kentucky in America, called *The Girl that Married a Flop-Eared Hound Dog!* Of all these versions, though, it is the one by Madame de Beaumont that remains the best known and most popular, and that is the one Linda Jennings uses as the basis for her appealing retelling in this book.



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Beauty and the Beast



*a traditional tale
retold by Linda Jennings
illustrated by Joanne Moss*

THERE WAS ONCE
A RICH MERCHANT WHO
HAD THREE DAUGHTERS.





He travelled far and wide to many lands, and often brought back wonderful gifts.

One day, just before he set out, he asked what each daughter would like. The two eldest asked for silken gowns and jewels. But Beauty, the youngest, liked simple things. She asked for a single red rose.

Before the merchant returned, he bought his elder daughters exactly what they had asked for. But a day's journey from home he remembered Beauty's request.

"How could I have forgotten!" he cried. "Never mind, a red rose should surely be easy to find."



The merchant passed a great and splendid house and stopped to look through the gates into the garden.



Through the iron bars he saw a rosebush covered in red blooms.

“Surely the owner won’t mind if I help myself to a single red rose?” the merchant said to himself. He pushed open the gates and looked around. The garden seemed deserted, so he plucked one red rose from the bush.





“How DARE YOU
STEAL MY ROSES!”

came an angry roar.

The merchant turned and saw something so terrible that his blood ran cold.

It was a hairy beast with long yellow teeth and a mane of tangled hair. The merchant dropped the rose in horror. What had he done?



“**N**obody steals from *my* garden,” snarled the beast.

“Please spare me!” cried the merchant, dropping to his knees. “I only wanted one rose for my daughter.”



The beast growled. “I *will* spare you,” he said. “But on one condition. When you return home, you shall send me the first living thing that you meet.”

“That will be my dog,” thought the merchant. “He always greets me at the gate.”

“Whoever you send to me will be treated with the greatest kindness,” said the beast. “I promise you that.”

The merchant looked at the beast. To his surprise, he saw that his eyes were of the softest brown. The beast didn’t look as if he would harm the dog.





The merchant picked up the rose and hurried away from the beast. He travelled all day, yet the rose remained as fresh as when he had plucked it from the bush. How delighted Beauty would be.

At last the merchant reached home. As he opened the gate, his youngest daughter came running out to meet him.

"Father! You've brought me a rose!" cried Beauty, flinging her arms around him.



At that moment the merchant remembered the beast's words:

"You shall send me the first living thing that you meet."

Beauty's delight at her beautiful rose changed to tears, as her father told her about the beast.

"I shall *not* let you go," he cried.

"But you made a promise to the beast," said Beauty. "You must keep it." Then she smiled bravely through her tears. "Don't worry, Father, I shall be fine."





Beauty was feeling far from fine as she rode with her father to the beast's house. But she kept her feelings to herself, as her father kept blaming himself for stealing the rose.

"I'm not afraid to meet the beast," said Beauty. "Only someone kind and good could grow such a beautiful rose."



Beauty said goodbye to her father at the gate, and walked up to the house. The door was open, and she tiptoed in. She gasped in wonder at the crystal chandeliers and the fine rugs on the floor, at the magnificent carved furniture and the silver bowls filled with roses.



A detailed illustration of a woman with long, curly brown hair adorned with flowers. She is wearing a voluminous red dress with a yellow polka-dot pattern. She is standing in a room with a large, ornate fireplace where a bright fire is burning. To her left is a tall, thin candlestick holding a single lit candle. A heavy, patterned curtain hangs on the left side of the frame. The background shows a doorway and a window with a decorative valance.

Beauty entered
a long dining room,
where a cheerful fire
burned in the grate.

Just as Beauty wondered if she
should sit down, a voice from the
shadows said, "Welcome! Please join
me for a meal."

As the figure came towards her, Beauty found it difficult not to cry aloud. The beast was just as terrifying as her father had described.

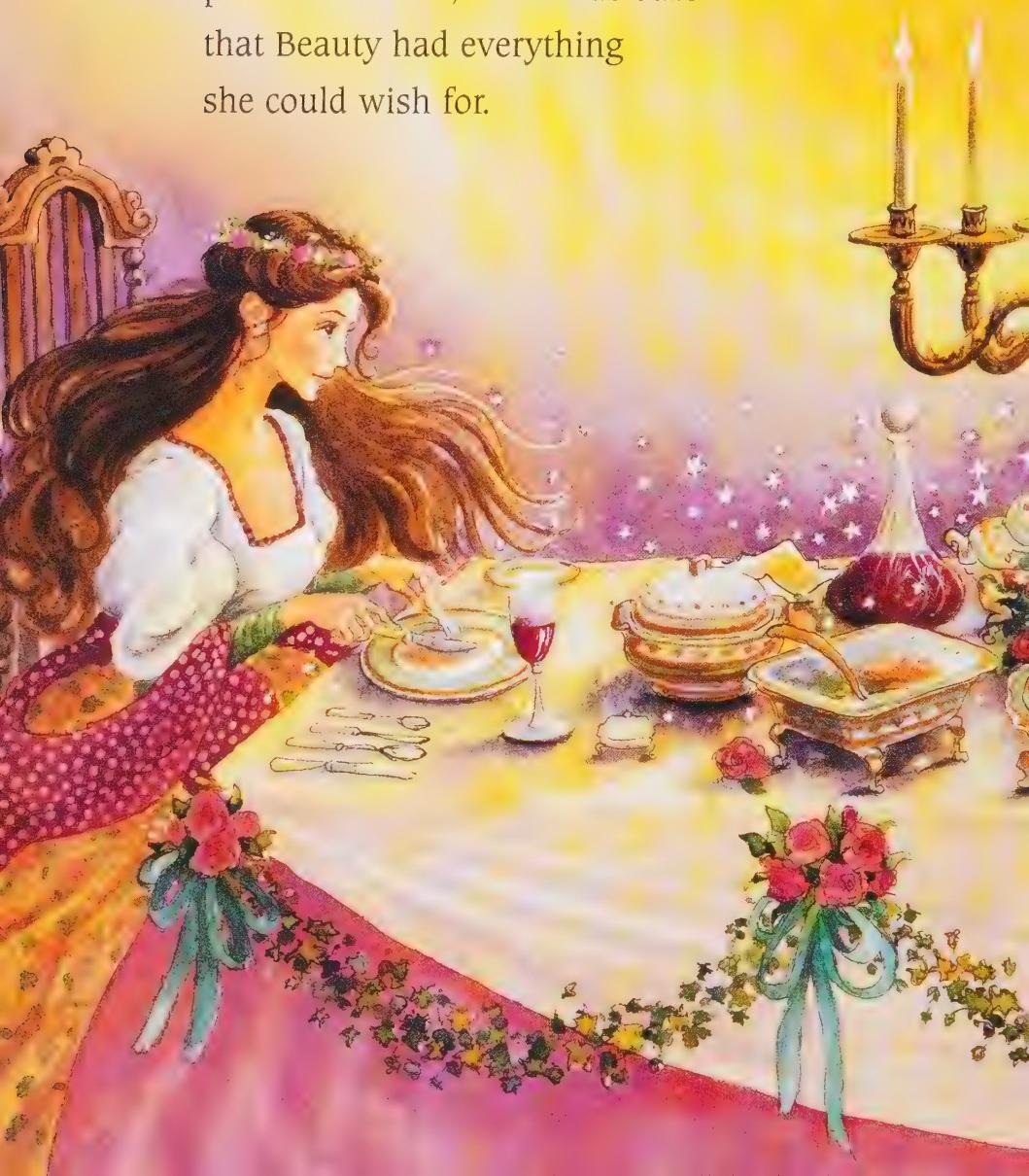
"I'm Beauty," she whispered, trembling.
"My father sent me to you, as you demanded. Am I to be your servant?"

"Not a servant," said the beast in a surprisingly gentle voice.

"You have come to be my friend."



Beauty and the beast sat down at the table. A delicious meal was magically set before them, and they began to eat. In spite of his ugly appearance, the beast had perfect manners, and made sure that Beauty had everything she could wish for.



"The whole of my house and gardens are yours," said the beast. "You are free to wander anywhere. Pick the roses, if you like, since I know you love them. There is just one thing I ask. Please keep me company in the evenings."



Beauty looked into the beast's eyes, and saw that they were kind. She felt she could trust him, and she was sure she would grow to love this beautiful house. The beast was not as frightening as he had first appeared. He had a friendly smile. "I shall enjoy our evenings together," she said.



So Beauty lived with the beast for a year. She knew every corner of the house and every flower in the gardens.



In the evenings, she and the beast talked of every subject under the sun, and read every book in the library. She no longer noticed his long, yellow teeth or his tangled mane.



One night Beauty dreamed of her family, and she felt homesick.

"Beast," she said one evening, "will you let me go home for a while? I promise to come back again."

The beast looked sad. "Go if you must," he sighed. "But I will miss you."

Beauty was so pleased to see her family that she stayed longer than she had promised.



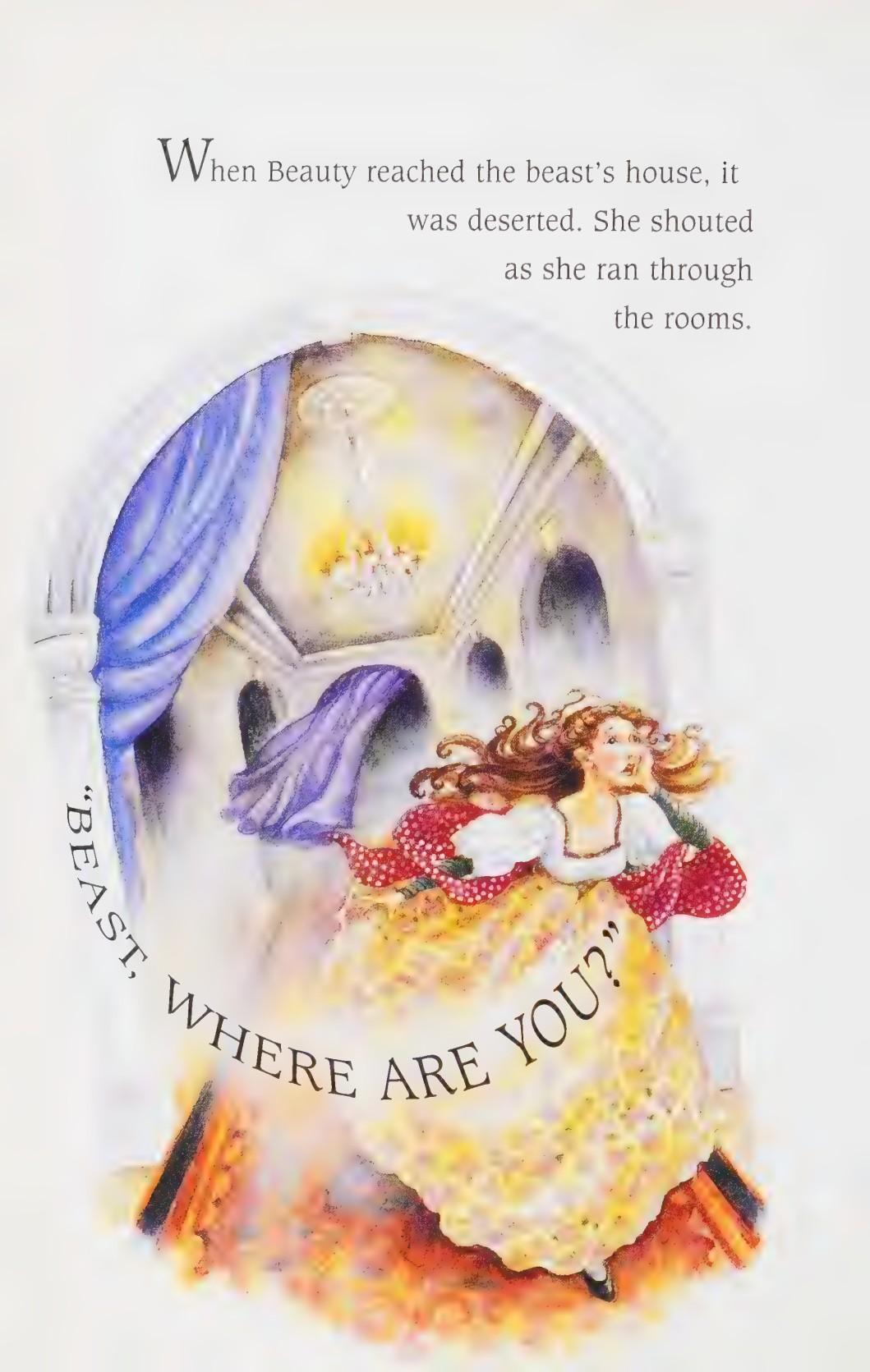
Then one night she dreamed that the beast
was ill and wanted her to return to him.



“But he is only a beast,” cried one of
her sisters.

“He needs me,” said Beauty. “I must go
at once.”

When Beauty reached the beast's house, it
was deserted. She shouted
as she ran through
the rooms.



"BEAST, WHERE ARE YOU?"

“He must be in the garden,” she said to herself, and there she found him, lying under the rosebush. He was dying!

“Oh, Beast,” cried Beauty, putting her arms around him, “don’t die, please.”



The beast opened his eyes and gazed at her.

“I didn’t think you would ever come back,” he whispered. “I could not live without you.”

“I’ll never leave you again,” cried Beauty, “for I love you, dear Beast.” And she kissed him gently.

THEN SOMETHING AMAZING HAPPENED...

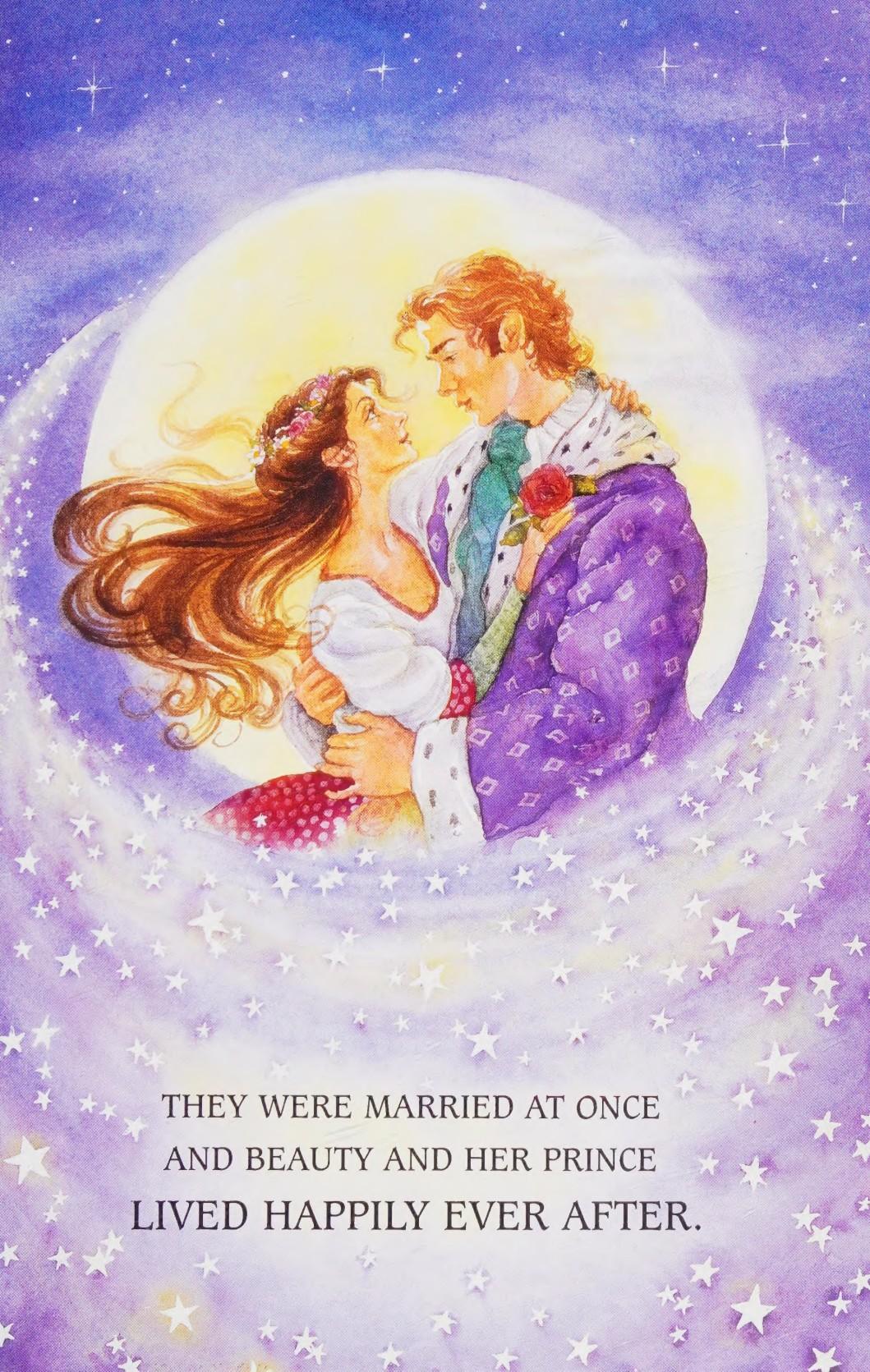
Beauty could hardly believe it – the beast was changing! His tawny mane became a head of fine hair, and his teeth pearly white. Gone was the tangled mane around his face. The beast had become a handsome prince.

“I was unkind to a witch,” explained the prince, “and she cast a spell on me. The spell could only be broken if someone learned to love me, despite my ugliness.”

“You are good and kind,” replied Beauty.
“That is why I loved you as a beast.”

“Then will you love me as a prince?”

“Of course I will,” said Beauty. “You are still the same person!”



THEY WERE MARRIED AT ONCE
AND BEAUTY AND HER PRINCE
LIVED HAPPILY EVER AFTER.

About the illustrator

JOANNE MOSS graduated from the University of the West of England in 1993. Since that time, she has been illustrating children's picture books and has a number of titles to her name. She lives in Surrey with her partner, their Newfoundland dog and a growing menagerie of smaller animals. Most of her spare time is spent roaming the countryside with the dog.



About the storyteller

LINDA JENNINGS has been a children's book editor and author for many years, publishing over forty children's books. She now works as a picture book editor and for a literary agent.

Linda lives in Islington, North London, with her five cats. In her spare time, she enjoys film-going, reading and music.

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